



Benton-Franklin Counties COVID-19 Outbreak Report

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The data in this report were collected from March 2020 through December 31, 2020.

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Summary

Benton-Franklin Health District (BFHD) conducts case interviews with people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and investigates outbreaks in Benton and Franklin counties. COVID-19 cases are identified by a positive PCR or antigen test. The information contained in this report is an overview of COVID-19 outbreaks that have been investigated by the BFHD Outbreak Mitigation teams and reported to the Washington State Department of Health via the Washington State Disease Reporting System (WDRS). During an outbreak investigation, team members advise and educate businesses, schools, long-term care facilities and other healthcare settings about appropriate guidance and strategies for disease prevention and control measures in their specific situations.

The data in this report is reflective of information known at this time, however since investigations are constant and ongoing along with the dynamic nature of COVID-19 disease surveillance there may be delays in reporting as data is continually being updated. The graphs below have been computed from data in WDRS including symptom onset and outbreak report dates.

Since the start of the pandemic, there has been 375 total outbreaks investigated by BFHD with over 3,408 cases associated with these outbreaks. With the current case counts for Benton-Franklin counties over 20,500, cases linked to outbreaks account for approximately 17% of reported cases. It is important to note that there are limitations to the data for several reasons. For example, not all businesses or facilities report cases to BFHD or they may not report all staff consistently. They also may not be aware of all cases associated with their facility since they typically would not know if visitors or customers become ill. In addition, during case interviews not all people will report their employer, visiting a specific business or being associated with a particular facility or setting.

Washington State Department of Health (DOH) separates healthcare settings from non-healthcare settings for reporting and investigating purposes due to the unique infection prevention considerations in a healthcare setting.

In this report, non-healthcare settings include congregate settings where COVID-19 outbreaks can occur such as agricultural settings, food processing facilities, restaurants, correctional facilities, schools, childcares and community events.

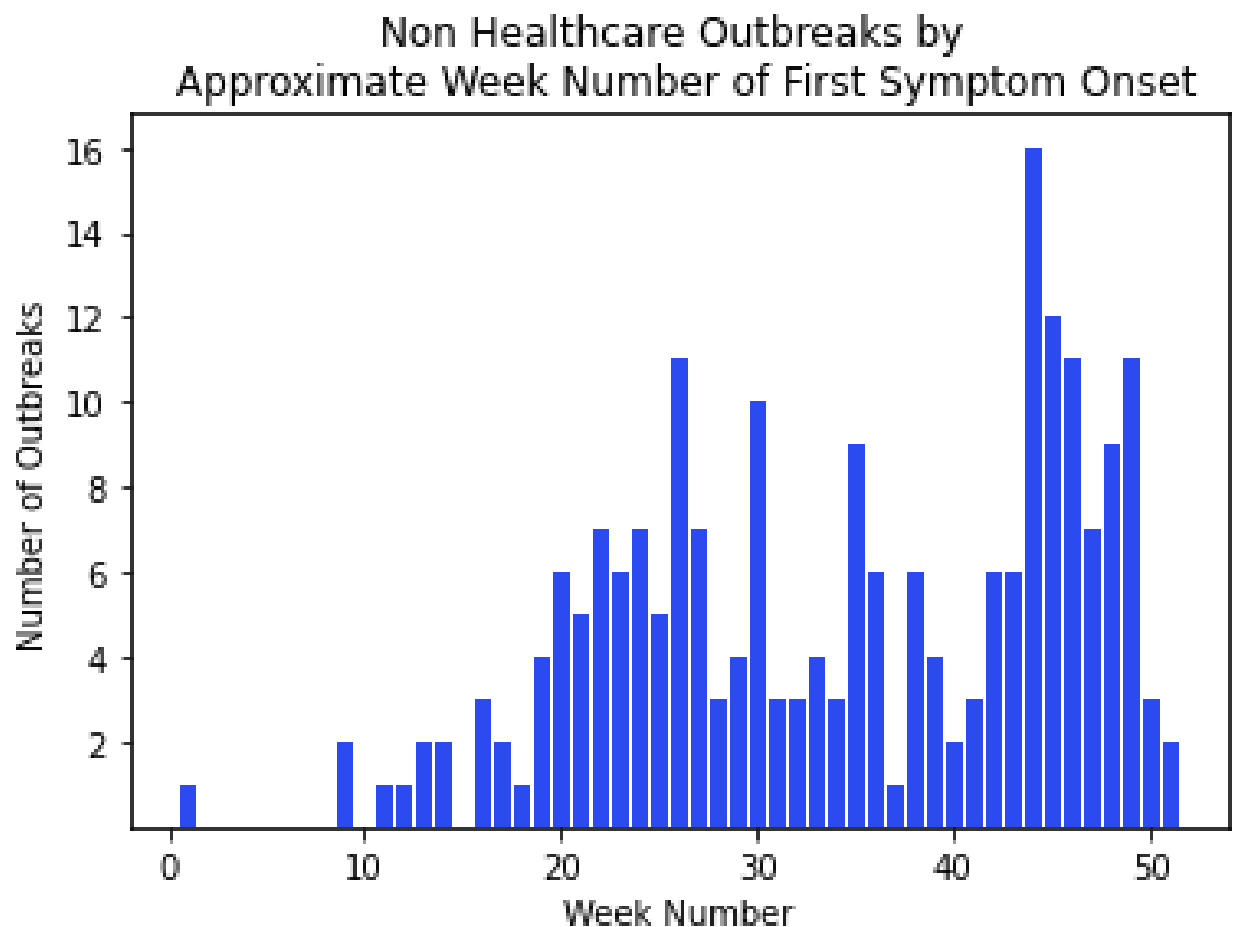
Healthcare settings consist of long-term care facilities, hospitals, outpatient settings (medical/dental clinics, etc.), behavioral health facilities, supported living settings, home healthcare, dialysis centers or independent senior living facilities. Long-term care facilities (LTCF's) include skilled nursing facilities or nursing homes, assisted living facilities and adult family homes.

COVID-19 Outbreaks in Non-Healthcare Congregate Settings

According to the document Public Health COVID-19 Guidance: Non-Healthcare Workplaces in Washington State, an outbreak in a non-healthcare congregate setting is defined by:

1. Two or more laboratory positive (PCR or antigen) COVID19 cases, AND
2. At least two of the cases have symptom onset dates within 14 days of each other, AND
3. Plausible epidemiological evidence of transmission in a shared location other than a household is observed

Since the start of the pandemic, BFHD has reported a total of 221 non-healthcare associated COVID-19 outbreaks. The graph below shows the number of non-healthcare outbreaks over time by week of approximate symptom onset date of the first reported case.



The table below includes all COVID-19 outbreaks reported by setting. Of the 221 non-healthcare congregate outbreaks that BFHD has investigated, 124 occurred in the service-providing industry. On average, 11 cases were identified per outbreak. The number of cases associated with each outbreak ranged from 2 to 301. The top three categories of non-healthcare congregate setting outbreaks identified are: Agriculture/employer housing/produce packing, Food service/restaurant and Retail.

Ten out of the eleven reported outbreaks in K-12 schools did not include students. One outbreak was identified in a classroom setting and had a total of two cases who were students, with no other cases involved.

Number of non-healthcare congregate settings COVID-19 outbreaks reported by setting, ever reported and reported during the most recent month

SITE CATEGORY	OUTBREAK SETTING DESCRIPTION	REPORTED IN DECEMBER	EVER REPORTED
SERVICE-PROVIDING INDUSTRY	Food service/restaurant	8	31
	Retail	6	21
	K-12 school	6	11
	Professional services/office-based (business, IT, finance, legal)	1	11
	Other	4	10
	Grocery	3	9
	Transportation/shipping/delivery	2	7
	Childcare	1	5
	Utilities	2	4
	Warehousing	0	4
	Place of worship	2	2
	Hotel	0	2
	Shelter/homeless service	0	2
	Bar/nightclub	0	1
	College/university	0	1
	Facility/domestic cleaning service	0	1
	Leisure/hospitality/recreation	0	1
	Personal care and service (hair, nails)	0	1
GOVERNMENT	Agency, facility, etc.	6	15
	Corrections	1	6
	Public safety	0	1
GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRY	Agriculture/employer housing/produce packing	2	36
	Manufacturing (food and food-related)	1	14
	Construction	2	12
	Manufacturing (non-food)	1	7
	Private event	1	2

	Other	1	1
	College housing	0	1
COMMUNITY,	Congregate housing (not employer provided)	0	1
OTHER	Large gathering	0	1
TOTAL		50	221

COVID-19 Outbreaks in Long-Term Care Facilities.

The Washington State Department of Health has set the definition of an outbreak in a long-term care setting as outlined in the [DOH Interim COVID-19 Outbreak Definition for Healthcare Settings](#).

An outbreak in long-term care setting is currently defined as:

1. One resident or healthcare worker with laboratory positive COVID-19 (PCR or antigen test) OR
2. Two or more residents or healthcare workers with new-onset respiratory symptoms consistent with COVID-19 within 72 hours of each other

Since the start of the pandemic, BFHD has reported a total of **86** long-term care facility (LTCF) COVID-19 outbreaks. An LTCF setting includes skilled-nursing facilities or nursing homes, assisted living facilities and adult family homes. Outbreaks may include residents as well as staff and visitors.

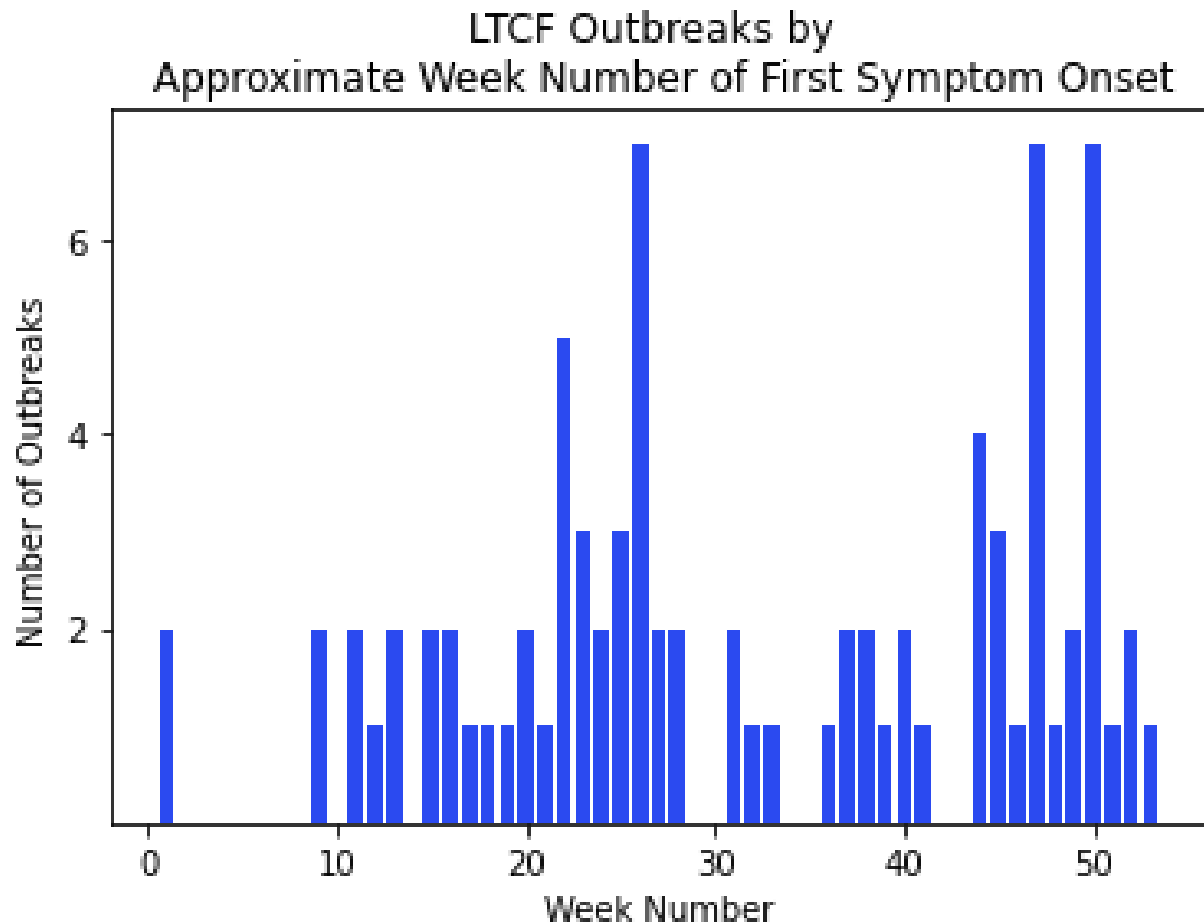
Not all cases were exposed at an LTCF, however, individuals were present in the facility during some point in their exposure period. Many cases may have visited multiple places during their exposure period and some may have visited an LTCF after disease onset.

Long term care facilities often have multiple levels of care within the same building and for reporting purposes these facilities have been assigned to the highest level of care. For example, if a facility has both an assisted and independent license, an outbreak associated with their facility would be assigned to the assisted living category in WDRS.

Total LTC cases for residents and staff in Benton-Franklin counties: 740

A total of 740 COVID-19 cases (under 4% of current total cases) have been identified as associated with a LTCF as compared to the current statewide data that 6% of total cases in Washington State are associated with a LTCF as reported in the [DOH COVID-19 Long-term Care Report](#) from 12-15-20.

The graph below shows the number of LTCF outbreaks over time by week of the approximate symptom onset date of the first reported case.



COVID-19 Outbreaks in Non-Long-Term Care (Non-LTC) Healthcare Settings.

As referenced above, [DOH Interim COVID-19 Outbreak Definition for Healthcare Settings](#) also contains the current definition of an outbreak in a *residential* healthcare setting such as residential treatment centers or supported living settings.

1. One patient or healthcare worker with laboratory positive COVID-19 (PCR or antigen test) OR
2. Two or more patients or healthcare workers with new-onset respiratory symptoms consistent with COVID-19 within 72 hours of each other

BFHD has reported 16 outbreaks in supportive living settings since the beginning of the pandemic. Supportive living refers to a range of services and community living arrangements designed for individuals with disabilities.

The same document [DOH Interim COVID-19 Outbreak Definition for Healthcare Settings](#) also contains the definition of an outbreak in an *outpatient* healthcare setting such as a medical or dental clinic.

1. Two or more cases of laboratory positive COVID-19 in patients or staff with epi-linkage who do not share a household and are not listed as a close contact of each other outside of the workplace during standard case investigation or contact tracing.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, a total of 68 non-LTC healthcare-associated COVID-19 outbreaks have been reported by BFHD in settings including hospitals, home healthcare, independent senior living facilities and other outpatient medical or dental settings. These outbreaks may include staff and patients, residents, clients or visitors. DOH includes senior living in the healthcare category because these apartment-like settings are often co-located with long-term care facilities.

The figure below shows the number of non-LTC healthcare outbreaks over time by week of approximate symptom onset date of the first reported case.

